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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0233 08/18/00

~ NTP Client Ported! ~ People Are Talking! ~ New MyMail Released!
~ JUGS Comes to Jaguar! ~ New Cartridge Ethernet ~ MyAtari.net Coming!
~ Tiny Computers Closer! ~ Olympus Digital Zoom! ~ New AOL 6.0 Soon!
~ GNOME Defies Windows! ~ AMD Ships 1.1 GHz Chip ~ Songbird Update!

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-* Compaq Unveils New Internet Gadgets *-
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"

My typical monologue starts off with the latest weather report for here in New England. In keeping with "tradition", it's been cool. I finally discovered this past week a new celestial body in the sky. I believe it was once called, the SUN! I'd almost forgot what it looked like! <g> It was short-lived, however, so let's not jump the gun with rejoicing.

I heard from quite a number of Delphi members within the last 24 hours! Fortunately, I was forewarned because I had also received "the letter" from Delphi management notifying all Premium Plan members that Delphi's Legacy forums would no longer be supported, come November. Not dropped, but not supported. No technical support, nor customer service support. Essentially, Delphi is letting the Legacy Forums and other services continue to run until they break down and die - something that is inevitable sooner rather than later.

Because the letter went out to affected members yesterday, I don't have a lot of time to react and get it on paper into this week's issue. And boy do I have a lot to say about this decision! Perhaps I'll cool down over the next few days and I won't mention anything in next week's issue. Then again, I just may continue to fume and really go after this topic. We'll all know next week! Other than that, I don't have any other thought-provoking comments for this week. <g>

Until next time...

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MyMail Version 1.10 Released

Erik Hall released Version 1.10 of MyMail, the e-mail client for Stik/Sting. Improvements include:

- More mailboxes
- Scroll bar for mail selection and mailbox selection
- More filters
- Multi check of mail accounts
- Lots of bug fixes and improvements

http://www2.tripnet.se/~erikhall/programs/mymail.html

NTP Client Ported

From: Martin-Iric Racine <q-funk@pp.fishpool.fi>

Just uploaded to Funet and lip6: my port of K9, a very simple NTP client. This allows for easy synchronization with any server that sends NTP broadcasts.

Because NTP works in UTC and alters the RTC time, one must also run their MiNT setup in UTC mode (see tzinit manual).

Sadly, this puts MiNT behind Linux, in terms of flexibility: Linux can run in RTC=localtime and still use NTP, while MiNT does not currently know how to offset from UTC back to localtime, at the application level.

Still, if you don’t mind running everything in UTC, this little time client works very well. Enjoy!

Cartridge Ethernet Adapter

A new ethernet adapter for all ST, STe, TT and Falcon computer is now on sale. The adapter consists of two modules: First a cartridge-based bridge to which you connect the second module, a pocket ethernet adapter.

Read more (in German) and see pictures at http://www.asamnet.de/~hilgarte/ether.htm

Generic Sound XBIOS Patch

From: Odd Skancke <oskancke@online.no>

I’ve uploaded some info about GSXB (a "Generic Sound XBIOS" patch, that together with a driver, adds sound XBIOS compatibility to any Atari or Atari clone computers) to my page (see sig). At the moment this is only useful to Hades owners. As soon as I get the ES1371 driver to work on Milan, I’ll upload a Milan version of it. GSXB itself will run on any machine, but that is pointless without any drivers.

Regards,

Odd Skancke - ozk@atari.org - http://assemsoft.atari.org

MyAtari.net: New Atari Magazine & Community Planned

Matthew Bacon has announced MyAtari.net, a Web magazine for Atari ST/TT/Falcon users that will launch in the fall. The magazine will include news, product reviews, feature articles, tutorials,

competitions, software downloads, a Q&A section, and Classified Ads.
http://www.myatari.net

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Delphi’s Legacy Forums, A Dying Breed?!?

To: All users of legacy services on Delphi
From: Rusty Williams, President of Delphi.com, Incorporated

As of November 1, 2000, the "legacy services" including premium homepage services, text-based online service, and Delphi e-mail will be provided on an unsupported basis.

We’re making these changes in order to focus our development and marketing efforts on Delphi’s free web-based forum services. With over 2.5 million members, Delphi.com is now one of the top 150 sites on the web and growing rapidly.

The legacy services may remain accessible, however, there will be no technical support. You should make arrangements as soon as possible get an alternative provider -- some options are described at the end of this message.

Q & A -

(Q) Why is Delphi making these changes?

(A) For the past three years, Delphi has focused on building the best forum services for people with a standard web browser and internet connection. The site has grown to more than 2.5 million members and 80,000 active forums. In order to maintain our leadership in this market, we must focus our efforts on our strengths. The text-based services, e-mail services and premium homepage services are all based on a technical platform that cannot be maintained on a cost-effective basis.

(Q) What exactly are "Text Online Services", "Premium Homepages" and "Delphi E-mail"?

(A) Depending on what type of account you opened and when, you may not even be familiar with all of these terms. The Text Online Service was offered as Delphi’s primary service through the late 80s and early 90s. Prior to now we’ve chosen to maintain this service and construct a "bridge" between the old text interface and the newer web-based forums. This has become impractical and too costly to support. The Premium Homepages were initially offered in 1997 and 1998 and included special authoring tools and additional storage for building homepages for a fee. Delphi E-mail is any account that uses xyz@delphi.com as an e-mail address (e-mail was originally provided in conjunction with Homepages and text online services).

(Q) What does "unsupported" mean?

(A) We hope that it means that these services will continue to be accessible for many months without any fees. If there aren't technical problems, then you will be able to use them for free. You won't be able to get technical support either by e-mail or phone so everything will be entirely on an "as available" basis. If something breaks, we may commit the resources to fix it or we may not. It will depend on the time, cost, and level of use.

(Q) I use the text-based games such as TQ and Scramble on the web. Will these be discontinued?

(A) Since these games are based on the old platform they are prone to technical problems. Our hope is to continue providing the games, but it will depend on the technical support costs.

Recommendation for alternative services:

E-Mail services: If you use Delphi.com for e-mail (your address is something@delphi.com), you should immediately set up an e-mail account with any Internet Service Provider or one of the free web-based providers such as Hotmail (http://www.hotmail.com), Yahoo mail (http://mail.yahoo.com). There is a list of over 5000 Internet Service Providers at http://www.isps.com. Once you have a new account set up, notify all of your existing contacts of your new address. You can arrange for your Delphi.com e-mail to be forwarded to your new account by sending a request to service@delphi.com.

Homepage services: you can set up free personal homepages at hundreds of sites on the web. Some of the most popular include http://www.tripod.com, http://www.homestead.com, http://www.geocities.com, http://www.fortunecity.com, and http://www.xoom.com. We're looking into contracting with a company to provide homepage services integrated with Delphi.com, but it will be several months before this could launch.

We appreciate your support of Delphi over the years and look forward to your continued participation in Delphi's free forum services at http://www.delphi.com.

Best regards,

Rusty Williams
President
Delphi.com Incorporated

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, it's back to work for me after a week-long vacation. Why is it that vacation weeks always seem to go by so fast and all the other weeks go by soooooo slooooow?

As expected, I returned to a mountain of things that others couldn't or wouldn't do, and it's going to take me a while to dig out from under all of it.... probably until the next vacation.

If any of you have been following my rants about Linux, you might be interested in knowing that the latest, greatest release of Debian Linux for m68k (Motorola 68000) computers is now out. It sports installations for the Atari TT, some Falcons and Atari clones, and best of all... It's FREE!

Check it out if you're in the market for a new OS.
http://m68k.debian.org

For any of you who don't use Delphi (and why not??), there's a letter from them elsewhere in this issue that was sent to all "premium service" subscribers. It's another sad chapter in the continuing saga of Atari users' struggles to do what they want to do. Give it a quick perusal.

Now let's get to the news, hints, tips, and info available on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Callum Lerwick asks for help with accessing the 'net from an Atari linked to a Linux PC (got all that?):

"Okay, I quietly slipped off to the PC about 5 years ago and became a Linuxhead and such. But I still have a Mega4 ST laying about. Just for kicks I'd like to get it on the net. What options do I have? I'm a unix geek so I'm thinking MiNT. I've just leeched KGMD, I messed with it when it was new but the 2mb RAM I had at that point wasn't enough. Is there anything I should know? Any newer KGMD's than 1.0 circa 1995? Thought there was an english translation of KGMD somewhere... Anything I should update? Any Y2K bugs? ;)

I figure I'll run a null modem PPP connect to a Linux box. I have various Linux boxes connected on a LAN NATted on a cable modem... But is there by any chance anything to do PLIP from an Atari to a Linux PC over a Parcp cable? Apparently the linux kernel supports an eight bit bi-direction mode now, but doesn't seem to be quite the same cable wiring... Should be much faster. ;)

My goal is to have it be a web server. Is there any up already?"

Jo Even Skarstein tells Callum:

"Try SpareMiNT, although I'm not sure if 4Mb is enough for rpm."

Martin-Eric Racine adds:

"It's worse than that. There is no SpareMiNT installation kit that someone could use from scratch.

Currently, one still needs to install KGMD or some other kit,

then alter the file system hierarchy for FHS, then install the RPM package manager and cpio.

In other words, SpareMiNT is still not a proper distribution kit."

Jo Even replies:

"Really? I scratched an ext2-partition, unpacked the rpm bootstrap archive to it, symlinked the folders to u:\, rebooted and started installing rpm packages. Apart from tar.ttp and gzip.ttp I didn't need anything.

OK, so it's not plug and play but if he's a unix-man he won't have any problems with it. It's just a matter of reading the docs in the rpm bootstrap archive.

The init-package doesn't work too well yet, fortunately I don't need it on my TT so I really don't care <grin>"

James Aubrey posts:

"I was wondering if there is a way to use Winston (the latest ver) and the ST internet client packages together to browse the web without using a modem? I have a cable modem and wanted to try and get an ST browser up and running to check it out. Also to telnet into some sites via the ST emulator."

Bob Wilson tells James:

"Go to emulators.com and download version 7.2 of gemulator. Set up can be tricky. It does not like certain programs. I turn off real player when I run it. It is not perfect and can crash at inopportune times but it is very very fast. I get about 8.5 times an STE on a P166 laptop. It will support screen sizes that the Atari never would but many programs will not work in these modes."

Andy Blakely asks:

"Is there a place in the US to buy MagicPC or MagicMac? I'd like to see a website that markets this OS so I can see the specs, screenshots, etc.

I'm thinking it would be fun to mess around with, although probably expensive."

Simon Osborne tells Andy:

"Systems for Tomorrow should sell it, www.systemsfortomorrow.com

Email: sales@SystemsForTomorrow.com
Mail: 4226 Hawthorne Ave - Kansas City MO 64133 - United States
Order by Phone: 816-358-2196

Order by Fax: 816-358-0079
Retail Store- 11010 East Winner Road - Independence MO 64052 Open Saturdays, 10AM to 5PM"

Andrew Owen adds his thoughts:

"I used to use the 680x0 version with a Powerbook 165 a number of years back. I was very impressed with it then and it's moved on quite a bit since then. Any GEM based application will run at a phenomenal speed on today's systems,

faster in many cases than native Mac or PC software."

Andy comes back and posts:

"Ok, now that I know where to buy it.... can somebody tell me where I can get info about it? I'd like to see some details, like what it offers and maybe some screenshots. Shouldn't there be a homepage which markets it?"

Andrew tells Andy:

"It's made by Application Systems Heidelburg. The UK distributor is System Solutions. They both have websites which I can't remember the addresses of. I think Toad is the US distributor. It does not emulate an ST, it is a GEM compatible operating system that will run GEM programs written for the ST, TT, and Falcon 030. Using NVDI it can support Calamus, TrueType, Bitstream and PostScript fonts. It doesn't use Atari ROMs. It has true pre-emptive multi-tasking. It is incredibly fast. It can use the full graphic capabilities of the host machine. On the Mac it is possible to use MIDI software via serial MIDI ports. I don't know if this is supported on the iMac. It can read Atari formatted disks. It is possible to share files between the host computer and Magic. It will not run most games files. It is very stable and reliable."

Ken MacDonald tells Andy:

"try: http://magicos.de "

Andy 'C' posts:

"Having always been a little bit behind the pack in the evolution game I have just acquired a copy of Cubase compact for the PC. Up to now I have been using Cubase on an Atari ST 1040. My question is how can I transfer all the Atari .all files to my PC. Any pointers would be much appreciated."

Andrew Owen tells Andy:

"Providing the file format is the same, just format a DD disk on the PC. Bung it in the Atari and copy the files across. The Atari can read and write PC disks without extra software. If you have a HD disk drive then you can use PC formatted HD disks instead."

Well folks, I know it's short, but that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - JUGS For Jaguar! WWF Royal Rumble!
  """""""""""""""""""""""""""""""   NFL Gameday 2001! Cool Pool!
                                    Duck Dodgers!! Chrono Cross!
                                    And much more!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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The Most Electrifying Brand in Sports
Entertainment Has Arrived on the Sega Dreamcast

"WWF Royal Rumble" Slams Into Retail

THQ Inc. and JAKKS Pacific announced the release of the highly anticipated ''WWF Royal Rumble" for the Sega Dreamcast.

Developed by critically acclaimed Yuke's Co. Ltd, creators of the top-selling Sony PlayStation game, ''WWF SmackDown!," ''WWF Royal Rumble" is the first wrestling game on any platform that gives players the opportunity to square off with up to nine wrestlers in the ring at once.

Game Informer magazine recently proclaimed ''WWF Royal Rumble" as ''...the fastest moving and best looking WWF title any home console has ever seen."

''With 'WWF WrestleMania 2000' for the Nintendo 64 and 'WWF SmackDown!' for the PlayStation continuing to top the charts in the U.S. and abroad, we're excited to now bring gamers the next generation of WWF gameplay with 'WWF Royal Rumble' for the Sega Dreamcast," said Peter Dille, vice president of marketing for THQ.

'''WWF Royal Rumble' is going to blow away both WWF and Dreamcast enthusiasts," stated Jennifer Richmond, vice president of marketing for JAKKS Pacific. ''The hottest license in interactive entertainment just got hotter."

''WWF Royal Rumble" is a direct translation of Sega's upcoming ''WWF Royal Rumble" arcade game, boasting ultra-fast gameplay and highly detailed graphics. Both the arcade and home versions were developed by Yuke's Co. Ltd., of which THQ holds a minority interest. Authentic WWF theme music introduces each of the more than 20 WWF Superstars, including The Rock, Stone Cold Steve Austin, Triple H and Rikishi.

For the first time ever, gamers can experience the true chaos of a ''Royal Rumble" match with up to nine WWF Superstars in the ring at one time. And numerous interactive backstage areas give players the chance to take the action out of the ring.

NFL GameDay 2001 for the PlayStation
Hits the Line At Full Speed on August 15

Continuing to deliver breakthrough football action through revolutionary gameplay and impressive graphics, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc.

announced that NFL GameDay 2001 from 989 Sports will be available at retail on August 15 for the PlayStation game console. Complete with running back Marshall Faulk of the World Champion St. Louis Rams providing strategic input and appearing on the title’s box cover, NFL GameDay 2001 features all 31 NFL teams and players, amazingly realistic 3D player and stadium models and tons of new motion-captured moves from 13 NFL players. Announcers Dick Enberg and Phil Simms return to call all the NFL excitement.

‘‘NFL GameDay 2001 builds on the winning formula of the original pro football franchise for the PlayStation game console and successfully captures the essence of the game," said Ami Blaire, director of product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. ‘‘We’re very pleased to team up with Marshall Faulk, a gamer himself and the winner of our ’Game Before the Game’ competition at this year’s Super Bowl, to bring his world championship expertise to the game as the NFL GameDay 2001 cover athlete and as one of our NFL player consultants."

The GameDay series’ award winning gameplay has been enhanced with the new ‘‘Play As Any Skill Receiver" feature that lets gamers become the quarterback, running back, wide receiver or tight end with the press of a button. With ‘‘on-the-fly" flexibility, gamers can throw cut blocks as a tight end for a running back, or as a receiver, signal the quarterback to throw the ball. Relentlessly savvy Artificial Intelligence (AI) has computer-controlled opponents learning player’s tendencies on both the offense and defense to shut down the attack. New Total Control Passing? allows players to lead or under throw receivers in any direction by simply pressing the directional buttons.

NFL GameDay 2001 sports the most realistic graphics to date with each NFL player depicted in amazing detail as they are scaled to their actual size, weight and body style. Stadium interiors are richly detailed and enhanced by animated backgrounds and historic landmarks and players will actually experience wear and tear on the playing field as the game progresses.

For the first time, animations including drag downs, shoves, gang tackles, low and high-wrap tackles, upending tackles, across-the-body ‘‘shoestring" catches and sideline ‘‘tip-toe" catches capture the intensity of real NFL action. Players can break ankle tackles and drag would-be tacklers on second and third efforts.

NFL GameDay 2001 reflects the latest NFL trends through actual NFL player input -- from motion-capture animations to plays designed with the help of real NFL players. Players motion captured for the NFL GameDay 2001 series are among the game’s top names, including Buccaneers FB Mike Alstott, Steelers RB Jerome Bettis, Bengals QB Akili Smith, Jaguars WR Jimmy Smith and LB Hardy Nickerson, Vikings DT John Randle, Raiders WR Tim Brown, CB Charles Woodson, and Giants CB Jason Sehorn. Joining Faulk among the more than 55 NFL stars creating the authentic playbooks for NFL GameDay 2001, were Buccaneers DL Warren Sapp, Vikings QB Daunte Culpepper, Bengals RB Corey Dillon and Dolphins LB Zach Thomas.

An improved ‘‘GM Mode" lets the videogamer play in multiple seasons as a coach, player or general manager. A new ‘‘Draft War Room" feature provides the gamer with a report of team weaknesses allowing players to determine needs on draft day. Gamers can control the everyday activities of a team over several seasons while drafting, trading and signing free agent players. State-of-the-art ‘‘Training Camp Mode" lets the gamer sharpen skills and increase knowledge of various offensive and defensive playbooks. The revolutionary ‘‘Play Editor" lets the gamer design custom plays and save them to a playbook.

Players can also direct how and where each player will move by assigning individual routes, blocking schemes and defensive alignments and assignments. NFL GameDay 2001 has also refined the ‘‘Create Player" feature, allowing gamers to customize a player’s physical appearance, salary and mental makeup. Graduating seniors from NCAA GameBreaker 2001 can even be imported to the draft.

First Wave of Madden Invasion Hits as EA Ships Madden NFL 2001 for the PlayStation

Football fans are going to have a hard time missing the new Madden NFL 2001 game this fall as Electronic Arts unleashed the first of five different versions of the game to a hungry and waiting public. Madden NFL 2001 for the PlayStation will be followed by versions for the PC, Nintendo 64, Game Boyfi Color, and finally the heavyweight PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system.

‘‘My game is always number one because we make it so that anybody from a rookie video game player to the expert gamers who have been playing it faithfully since 1989 can enjoy it," said Super Bowl winning coach and Emmy award-winning broadcaster John Madden. ‘‘Part of making the game accessible to a lot of people is not just in how you make the game, but in how many platforms it’s available on to play."

New in this year’s game are player models that show a whole new level of detail. Wristbands, visors, facemasks, turf tape and elbow pads all exist in the game, and are player specific so that each player has the same equipment in the game that they use in the real NFL.

Always a leader in the area of realistic gameplay, the weight and height of each player is now factored into collisions to help determine how much ground a ball carrier gains as the tackle is made. A small defensive back will have a tough time knocking down a big, bruising fullback. On the flip side, the lighter and quicker wide receivers will be able to shake a linebacker during a pass route if the linebacker is forced to cover the receiver. If the offense floods a zone and sends more receivers into an area on the field than the defense has defensive backs to cover them, big gains can occur.

‘‘This is our fifth year of creating Madden for the PlayStation and we feel this by far the best one ever," said Steven Chiang, executive producer for the Madden franchise. ‘‘Everything we’ve learned from the previous versions has been incorporated into this game to produce the best looking, best playing, most realistic and fun football game on the market."

As opposed to having to search for secret codes that will unlock parts of the game, Madden players will now be able to enjoy the satisfaction of actually working to gain these special perks. In Madden NFL 2001, EA brings the concept of interactive trading cards to a video game. It is now possible to collect ‘‘Madden Cards" in the game by performing certain tasks, and to trade or risk Madden Cards with friends via memory card. Cards unlock legendary teams, players, stadiums, and create special abilities in certain players and teams.

In the past, Madden games have only included players currently active in the league, but now Madden NFL 2001 includes hundreds of the greatest NFL

players from the past. Also included are all the All-Madden teams that John has picked since 1984, including the All-Super Bowl and Millennium teams.

Other new features in the game include a two-minute drill that lets up to ten gamers compete against each other for the high score. Create-a-team allows Madden fans to create their own team by modifying existing rosters with new and retired players, team name, and stadium. New player specific touchdown celebration dances and taunts bring the game to life. New defensive controls allow the user to read the offensive set at the line of scrimmage and adjust pass rushing routes, linebacker drops and pass coverage instantly. EA also obtained the exclusive rights to the Coaches Club license and worked with NFL coaches to develop authentic strategy and signature playbooks in the game.

Madden NFL 2001 for the PlayStation is rated ‘‘E" (Everyone). It is analog controller compatible and supports up to eight players. Consumers may purchase the game directly at the EA Store(SM) (http://www.eastore.ea.com) or by calling EA Direct Sales at 800/245-4525. The game has a suggested retail price of $39.95.

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Strengthens Fall 2000 Lineup With Cool Pool: Billiards Master for PlayStation 2

Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. announced that it will bring all the fun of Cool Pool: Billiards Master home to the PlayStation2 this fall. Developed by ASK Co., Ltd., Cool Pool: Billiards Master is scheduled for release on PlayStation 2 on November 26th.

‘‘We are pleased to announce Cool Pool: Billiards Master for PlayStation 2," said Larry Muller, COO of Take-Two Interactive. ‘‘Fans of the sport of pool and billiards will surely be delighted with the amazing gameplay and realism that Cool Pool: Billiards Master has to offer."

Cool Pool: Billiards Master is a 3D pool simulation game where players will be challenged in a variety of extremely realistic pool games featuring beautiful graphics and amazingly realistic ball physics including friction, speed, collision, and roll. Choose from a wide variety of levels including: US Nine, International Nine, Eight, Straight Pool, Rotation, Frozen and Free Play, plus several bonus games: Bowlliards, Carrot and Random Six. The game can be played from many different camera angles and parameters. Players can train and strengthen their skills in Lesson Mode where they can practice basic to advanced techniques such as curve shots and position play. Once ready, players can then make their way through the ranks to battle against Cool Pool’s Top Ranked Players. Cool Pool: Billiards Master’s full simulation of realistic billiards action make for great gameplay and now with the DUALSHOCK2 analog controller allows for a keen sense of resistance and force with each called shot.

Infogrames Zaps Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers Starring Daffy Duck for Nintendo 64 Into Stores This Week

Daffy Duck Stars in His Very Own Action-Adventure Game Based On The Looney Tunes Cartoon, ’Duck

Dodgers & the 24th 1/2 Century’

Dodgers. Duck Dodgers. Infogrames announced today that it is bringing one of the world’s favorite ducks, Daffy Duck, to most major retail stores this week in Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers Starring Daffy Duck for the Nintendo 64 game console. It’s up to Duck Dodgers, savior of the Universe (and master klutz), to stop Marvin the Martian from his diabolical plan of destroying the Earth. Grab your ray guns and help Daffy save the Earth!

Marvin has built the Ultimate Weapon as part of his Diabolical Plan to wipe out our planet. But there’s just one small problem... he doesn’t have the energy to power his new toy! To get it, Marvin sends his minions out to the nearby planets to collect energy atoms. Lucky for us, our klutzy hero, Duck Dodgers, and his trusty sidekick Porky Pig, are ready to take on Marvin and his minions.

‘‘Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers Starring Daffy Duck gives players the feeling of actually being in a Looney Tunes cartoon by providing a truly living environment -- just about everything in the game is interactive," said Mike Markey, vice president of marketing for Infogrames’ San Jose Label. ‘‘Daffy’s hilarious witicisms and klutzy antics will keep children of all ages engaged for hours on end."

‘‘Infogrames has done a fantastic job of bringing the Looney Tunes characters to life," said Michael Harkavy, vice president, Warner Bros. Worldwide Publishing, Kids’ WB! Music, Interactive Entertainment. ‘‘This is yet another example of the great product that grows from the extraordinary relationship between Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment and Infogrames."

Players will waddle through five huge worlds, each world featuring varied gameplay, such as sewage surfing and silly boss encounters. On one planet, players will discover an arcade filled with mini-games. Here, players can put their skills to the test with a Pong-style tennis match, a basketball game and a shooting gallery, not to mention Daffy’s very own take on the popular game, Quake, entitled ’Quack.’ In addition, our cartoon pals will be armed with gizmos galore, including the ACME jetpack, raygun, boxing gloves, and Instant Martian decoys to aid them in their quest to foil Marvin’s plan.

Developed by Paradigm Entertainment, Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers Starring Daffy Duck is available at an estimated retail price of $49.99 and can be found at most major retail outlets.

Square Ships Chrono Cross for the PlayStation

Square Electronic Arts announced the release of Chrono Cross for the PlayStation game console. Chrono Cross, sequel to the award-winning Chrono Trigger, is an action role-playing game that follows two young heroes on their search for a mysterious artifact. Chrono Cross offers players multiple endings, an extraordinary cast of more than 40 playable characters, and a combat system which allows players to customize characters with a variety of magical spells and combat techniques.

The story takes place 20 years after the events in Chrono Trigger and centers around a seemingly ordinary boy named Serge and a young woman named

Kid. Serge’s simple life in a small fishing village takes a turn for the worse when his presence suddenly triggers a portal to a parallel universe, leaving him in a strange yet familiar world where his alternate self has been dead for 10 years. Even before he has time to ponder his situation, he is confronted by bandits, and rescued by a young woman named Kid. Caught up in events beyond his control, Serge agrees to follow Kid on her quest to retrieve an artifact, unwittingly embarking upon an adventure that will span time and space. Adding a new layer of complexity to his quest is the shadowy pursuit of an unknown entity bent upon his capture. In a race against time to find the artifact, Serge is forced to delve into his past for answers to the mystery posed by both his pursuers and the artifact itself. This mystery must be solved before the malevolent entity can bridge the gap between worlds, and bring ruin to both.

An epic saga spanning two worlds, Chrono Cross expands beyond the traditional linear plot line by providing players with multiple choices that can culminate in one of 10 different endings. Complimenting this dynamic story element is a cast of more than 40 interactive characters, each with its own particular strengths and weaknesses.

Players face their enemies using a combination battle system that provides flexible fighting options. For example, there are three levels of hand-to-hand combat and special fighting techniques that allow two or more party members to team-up and execute powerful combination moves. The battle system offers players variety and an added action element to the fighting that traditional turn-based fighting games don’t. Players are further aided by an overhead view that shows enemies approaching. This gives players the option of choosing when to fight and eliminates random encounters for which they may not be prepared.

In addition to traditional combat, players can also use magic on their enemies. Chrono Cross’ magic system incorporates supernatural elements that are strategically placed in a character’s ‘‘grid," a panel of slots which can be assigned elements. The grid gives players the flexibility to tailor their spells to the mission at hand. As a character becomes more powerful, the number of slots on their grid increases, allowing access to more spell elements. Spell placement on the grid determines spell attributes. The higher on a grid a spell is placed, the more powerful, though it takes more effort to cast. Spells at the lower end of the grid don’t pack as much power, but can be quickly executed.

Chrono Cross is compatible with the DUALSHOCK analog controller and has a suggested retail price of (US)$40. The game carries an ESRB rating of ‘‘T" (Teen).

Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future Splashes Onto Sega Dreamcast

Dive into an underwater adventure like no other! Sega of America, Inc. introduced ‘‘Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future" for the 128-bit, Internet-ready Sega Dreamcast videogame console. A sequel to the award-winning Sega Genesis hit, ‘‘Ecco the Dolphin," the game takes players on a 3D underwater adventure of the deep blue sea. Voted ‘‘Best Adventure Game of E3," ‘‘Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future" is available at retail stores nationwide this month.

Filled with expansive underwater environments and breathtaking

civilizations, ‘‘Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future" was created using hundreds of oceanographic videos and National Geographic photography. In addition, the game integrates advanced AI technology designed to recreate real ocean animal behaviors, communication and interaction, and ultra-responsive control to mimic the motions, behavior and characteristics of a living dolphin. The vibrant lighting effects and ambient soundtrack make ‘‘Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future" a true-to-life underwater experience.

‘‘Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future is a graphical masterpiece and a game that will entertain both casual and hard-core gamers alike," said Charles Bellfield, director of marketing communications for Sega of America. ‘‘With an engaging storyline, breakthrough graphics and intriguing puzzles and mazes, Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future provides an all new adventure for the Sega Dreamcast."

From the mind of award-winning science-fiction author David Brin comes ‘‘Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future," an action/adventure game that takes players on a journey between past and future worlds to preserve a peaceful existence for all creatures. As the story goes, in the future, human and dolphin live harmoniously on Earth under the protection of a supreme being called The Guardian. Man and dolphin travel into space to explore the unknown, leaving behind only a few dolphin caretakers on the Earth. The terrible Foe seizes this opportunity to inflict destruction on the world. Players assume the role of Ecco, the bottlenose dolphin, who must repair the Foe’s damage in the past to ensure the evolution of the dolphin and humans in the future.

‘‘Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of the Future" is available in stores at a suggested retail price of $39.95. ‘‘Ecco The Dolphin: Defender of the Future" is rated E for Everyone. www.eccothedolphin.com.

Acclaim Ships RC Revenge for the PlayStation

Acclaim Entertainment announced that its remote-control racer, RC Revenge, started shipping Thursday to national retail outlets.

Designed specifically for the PlayStation, RC Revenge features dozens of cars and boats with varying levels of top speed, handling, and stability. As players race through the action-packed game levels, they earn bonus vehicles by completing championship races and pick up additional weapons to add to an arsenal filled with water balloons, lightning bolts and oil slicks.

RC Revenge takes place within a movie-themed racing world. Races to win the four cups (Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum) take place in five diverse environments including a Jungle World, Horror World, Sci-fi World, Monster World and Cartoon World. The races take place on water-specific and hybrid tracks so that boats can now race against cars. RC Revenge also sports a hand-brake feature specifically designed to enhance gameplay by giving the player the ability to power-slide or perform super tight turns and the special track editor allows players the ability to create their own racing tracks and save to a memory card.

RC Revenge has been designed so that even beginners will find the game to be very easy to pick up and play, and long-time game enthusiasts will find that the addictive gameplay will keep them racing for hours.

Acclaim has also dedicated a website to RC Revenge in order to provide additional information, artwork, and movies for the game. This sight is accessed at: http://www.acclaim.com/games/rcrevenge/index.html.

THQ and Disney Interactive Announce ‘‘Disney’s the Little Mermaid II" for PlayStation

THQ Inc. announced an agreement with Disney Interactive to publish and distribute ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II" for the PlayStation game console. The game is scheduled to release throughout North America and Canada in fall 2000 in conjunction with the direct-to-video release, ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea."

‘‘Disney is a leader in creating timeless family entertainment," stated Alison Locke, executive vice president, North American Publishing, THQ. ‘‘The wide recognition of ‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid,’ coupled with THQ’s proven track record in the kids gaming arena, is sure to make ‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II’ for PlayStation a hit."

Walt Disney Pictures’ 1989 animated underwater adventure, ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid," was a box office sensation. Now the characters continue their adventures in a direct-to-video sequel, ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea." Joining original characters including Ariel, Flounder, Sebastian and Triton is Melody, newly introduced as Ariel’s daughter.

In ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II" for PlayStation, players assume the role of either Ariel or Melody, and are challenged to solve puzzles, collect treasures, avoid enemies and interact with friends in 15, 3D underwater and land-based levels. Players will find bonus mini-games throughout, including an underwater sea adventure with ‘‘Sebastian’s Orchestra."

The game uses stills from the movie to create an animated 3D-world, and features more than 30 minutes of full motion video from the original ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid" and ‘‘Disney’s The Little Mermaid II: Return to the Sea." Footage is cut into gameplay to help guide the story. The game also features original character voices and music from the direct-to-video release.

NYKO’S Viper2 Gets Licensed for Success

Twist, turn, blast and burn with the NYKO Viper2 controller for the PlayStation game console.

The Viper2 is the first and only third-party controller for PlayStation with vibration function and dual analog sticks to be licensed in North America. It received licensing status from Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. (SCEA) earlier this year. The SCEA license indicates compatibility with PlayStation hardware.

The NYKO Viper2 controller is equipped with dual vibration motors and provides realistic game interaction with compatible software. The Viper2

also provides special functions such as independent turbo, steering wheel simulation mode, and oversized ergonomics for superior comfort and outstanding performance.

The eight-way directional pad is excellent for fighting games while the steering wheel simulation mode is ideal for racing games. It allows the right analog stick to respond as the throttle and brake functions, which provides superior response and control.

‘‘This license represents another significant milestone for NYKO," said Robert Rienick, NYKO vice president sales and marketing. ‘‘We are proud to have met SCEA’s strict testing standards. Our engineering effort to earn this new license over the past two years reinforces our commitment to the PlayStation consumer. NYKO considers it an honor to be the first to license this type of controller from Sony Computer Entertainment America."

The Viper2 is available in five assorted translucent colors and can be purchased at such retail stores as Best Buy, Target, Wal-Mart, Toys ’R Us, Babbages and FuncoLand at a suggested retail price of $24.95.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online - Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Songbird Update

Due to the recent move, the Songbird Productions mail order business will be closed for most of August while we relocate our merchandise. Any orders received will be temporarily held until then.

Also, Songbird has almost exhausted its supply of new Jaguar products. Soccer Kid is out of stock, Hyper Force has only one copy left, and Protector and Skyhammer have a few copies each. When Skyhammer is gone, it is gone and will likely never be reproduced again. The other games will have a second run made in the next 2-3 months.

Likewise, supplies of Ponx, SFX, and Lexis are running low, and there are no plans to reproduce these games once they have sold out.

Once Songbird re-opens, we will offer a bunch of new products for sale, including Jaguar Rapid Fire Controllers, Lynx Remnant, and Lynx Crystal Mines II: Buried Treasure. All are limited edition items that may not be offered beyond their initial run.

Thanks for your continued support, and for your patience during this transition.

Sincerely,

Carl Forhan
Songbird Productions
http://songbird.atari.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUGS, New Underground Software Loader Comes to Jaguar Platform

The fabled JUGS (Jaguar Unmodified Game Server) proves to be more than just a rumor

August 14 , 2000 -- In a moved that shocked the Underground Jaguar Development Community to it's very core, the JUGS Team officially announced the availability of it's JUGS system today. The JUGS System has been rumored to exist for many months, but until now it was largely dismissed as an elaborate hoax. With the addition of this system to the available Underground Jaguar Development Tools, the ability to load and run Underground Jaguar Software is now within reach of the masses.

The loss of the key to the Jaguar internal encryption routines has prohibited many people from being able to load and run software created since the Jaguar console was declared an open system. Until recently the only way to use this new software was to own an Official Jaguar Development System / FLASH Cartridge, or to modify a Jaguar console to circumvent the operating system encryption routines.

[Ed. note - Songbird Productions has also published new software available in cartridge format since the Jaguar was declared an open system.]

The JUGS System was revealed via the Official JUGS Website at www.buyjugs.com to consist of a special cable to connect to your PC Compatible, a proprietary PC based loading utility program, and sophisticated server firmware piggybacked within the BattleSphere Jaguar Game Cartridge. Using a special code embedded within BattleSphere, software can be loaded into the RAM memory in any Jaguar console and then executed. JUGS bypasses the Jaguar's internal encryption routines by running software after the BattleSphere game has passed encryption tests on power-up. The fact that the server code is executed from an existing cartridge enables the product to be the only one of it's kind which does not require any soldering or cutting of the Jaguar circuitry.

For More Information, Visit www.buyjugs.com, or www.battlesphere.com, or Contact: sales@buyjugs.com

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

AMD Starts Shipping 1.1 Gigahertz Chip

Computer chip maker Advanced Micro Devices Inc. said on Monday it began shipping its 1.1 gigahertz processors to major computer companies, and said it expected to meet its goals for shipments in the coming quarters.

AMD has been in a seesaw battle with rival Intel Corp. to produce the fastest processors. AMD just beat out Intel earlier this year with a chip running at 1 gigahertz, or one billion cycles per second.

Sunnyvale, Calif.-based AMD said the personal computer market outlook is strong, and the company was ‘‘on track to meet its goal of doubling shipments of seventh generation PC processors to 3.6 million units in this quarter, and again doubling shipments to 7.2 million units in the fourth quarter."

AMD said it expected that its total PC processor shipments, including AMD Athlon, AMD Duron, and AMD-K6-2 processors, could approach 7 million units this quarter and 9 million units in the fourth quarter. AMD said its new 1.1 gigahertz Athlon processors are priced at $853, and systems that feature the chips will sell for about $2,500 each. The chips will be used in computers expected to reach the market on Aug. 28.

Adobe Ships GoLive 5.0

Adobe announced this morning they are shipping the much-anticipated GoLive 5.0.

Version 5.0 introduces such new features as an on-board interactive editor for editing multimedia, "360Code" that enables control over any Web design source code, beefed up site planning and management, "asset" check in and out through WebDAV support, and "smart links" that provides drag-and-drop object-sharing with other Adobe products. Plus, advanced functionality such as Dynamic Link simplifies the incorporation of dynamic database and e-commerce capabilities.

GoLive 5.0 is tightly integrated with Adobe’s professional Web and graphics products, including Photoshop, Illustrator, LiveMotion, After Effects and Premiere. And Adobe will provide further additions to the GoLive product family, based on the GoLive 5 foundation that will provide collaboration, e-business, site management and content management to the web workgroup, according to Hank Skorny, senior director of Adobe’s Internet Products Group.

"With version 5.0 we’re empowering professional Web designers with the richest visual design tool to date for improving their development process," said Michael Hopwood, director of Web product management at Adobe. "And tighter integration with the industry-standard Web design toolset, which includes Photoshop, Illustrator, and LiveMotion, will make GoLive the preferred choice for serious Web designers."

Adobe GoLive 5.0 for Macintosh and Windows is now available in the U.S. and Canada for an estimated street price of US $299, and can be purchased online through the Adobe Store at www.adobe.com or from an authorized reseller. GoLive 5.0 is also now available as part of The Adobe Web Collection, which also includes Illustrator 9.0, LiveMotion 1.0, and Photoshop 5.5, available for an estimated street price of US $999 in the U.S. and Canada. Pricing and availability may vary by region.

Olympus Introduces 10X Zoom Digital Camera

If you think it was hard to choose between the myriad digital cameras available, don't look now, but things just got more complicated. Olympus America has released the USB connectable C-2100 Ultra ZOOM, a full featured 10X optical zoom/2.6X digital zoom, EVF filmless digital camera. Due this month, the US $999 camera also has a QuickTime movie feature.

The QuickTime Movie feature provides the ability to film short movies, to post on the Internet or view through the camera's LCD. You don't need an external microphone as sound is recorded directly from the camera's built-in microphone. The video with sound can also be viewed on any TV with the included NTSC AV cable.

Sporting a half-inch, 2.1 megapixel CCD and lens, the C-2100 Ultra ZOOM is the first Olympus filmless camera to offer a 10X image stabilized all-glass aspherical zoom lens from 7-70mm (38-380mm equivalent in 35mm film photography). The result, according to Olympus, is a reduction in unwanted user camera shake for a clearer image. The camera produces a 35mm equivalent telephoto over 980mm for extended range and at f2.8 -3.5, the lens is fast and bright with 1/3 step aperture control to f11 throughout the zoom range to maximize camera control.

According to Olympus' product announcement, new features built into the C-2100 Ultra ZOOM include: fast performance times with the 16MB SD-RAM buffer for a burst mode of three frames per second and 1.2 second shot to shot performance; an electronic viewfinder (EVF) SLR viewfinder design; and iESP TTL or spot autofocus and focusing illuminator to focus "from macro to infinity." White Balance is also included in the new iESP multi-pattern full-automatic TTL system with four preset manual selections. The metering system features the Digital ESP multi-patterned metering system, center weighted, spot or multi-spot metering of up to 8 spot readings.

The manual exposure mode allows the shutter and aperture to be selected independently. The automatic exposure modes include Aperture Priority, Shutter Priority, Program Auto and the new S-Program mode with Portrait, Landscape, Sports, Night Scene, and Custom setup modes. Exposure compensation is available in +/- 2 steps EV by one-third step increments and Auto Bracketing from 1/3, 2/3 or one-stop increments for three or five shots.

The C-2100 Ultra ZOOM provides four resolution levels of recording in TIFF or Low and Normal JPEG compressions for photographic images, for a total of 12 different settings. The digital camera employs SmartMedia storage cards and comes with an 8MB SmartMedia card and it can accept cards of up to 64MB.

Compaq Unveils New Internet Gadgets

Compaq Computer Corp. Tuesday unveiled five Web access products, expanding its focus well beyond the personal computer.

The new products included two new e-mail two-way pager devices, which will

be sold under the Compaq iPaq brand name through a deal with Research In Motion of Canada. The e-mail devices come in a handheld organizer-size model and a smaller model. Both send and receive wireless e-mail.

Compaq, through a partnership with CMGI Inc.’s online music provider iCast, also unveiled a portable personal audio player that allows users to download music from the Web onto the pager-size device.

Two new products were made for the home, including the home Internet appliance, a toaster-size computer that allows a user to surf the Web and get e-mail. The Internet appliance, called the iPaq home Internet appliance, was offered through a partnership with Microsoft Corp.’s MSN Network.

A home networking hub was offered to help users with multiple personal computers to link them together wirelessly and with peripherals, such as printers, as well as to the same online connection. Along with the hub, WatchGuard Technologies Inc. would provide a firewall to protect networked PCs from security threats.

Group Takes Next Step Toward Tiny Computers

Researchers said on Thursday they had developed microscopic chemical switches that could form the basis of tiny, fast and cheap computers that will ‘‘do things we cannot even imagine now."

The hair-thick switches can be turned on and off time after time, offering the possibility of random-access memory -- a key facility of computers that allows users to store and manipulate information.

The team at the University of California Los Angeles hope they have taken a big step toward making a ‘‘molecular computer" that will replace the big, unwieldy and power-hungry silicon computers of today.

‘‘With molecules comes the message that we are working as small as we possibly can," Fraser Stoddart, a UCLA chemistry professor who designed the switches, said in a telephone interview.

Researchers predict that molecular computers will some day replace those based on silicon chips and could ultimately make it possible to have a computer so small it could be woven into clothing, for instance. They should be able to hold vast amounts of data safely, with less fear of crashes and other glitches.

‘‘A molecular computer will enable us to do things we cannot even imagine now," UCLA’s James Heath, who led the study, said in a statement. It would be a million times more efficient, he said, than a silicon-based machine. The basis of the tiny switch is a molecule called a catenane. As described in this week’s issue of the journal Science, it consist of two tiny, interlocked rings made up of atoms linked in a circle.

‘‘Imagine two interlocked rings as part of a chain," Stoddart said. Each has two structures on it, called recognition sites, that will interact electrochemically.

A pulse of electricity will remove one electron, causing one ring to flip or rotate around the other. This turns the switch on. Putting an electron

back turns the switch off.

Last year, the same team made a less-efficient switch made out of a molecule called a rotaxane that could work only once.

‘‘It was a bit like a fuse -- you could use it for as long as you wanted to and then you lit it and blew it," Stoddart said. ‘‘It gave us the basis for read-only memory."

The new switch can be open and closed over and over again -- like the difference between a CD-ROM that can be recorded on once, and a disk that can be erased and used over and over.

‘‘It is very robust. You can do this at room temperature," Stoddart, whose team is cooperating with a group at Hewlett-Packard, said.

It is also easy to see whether the catenane is working. ‘‘It is green in the starting state ... and then it switches to being maroon," Stoddart said. ‘‘You can use your eyes to detect it."

At first the switch worked in solution -- not very practical for a computer -- but Stoddart’s team managed to get the molecules to form a film. They will sit in place just like a thin film of oil, Stoddart said.

Having switches is one thing, but the scientists now need wires to hook them together and the overall architecture to make the components into a computer.

‘‘There is still a problem with wires -- if you can get them down to about a millionth of their present size, then these can be very, very small devices," Stoddart said.

His group is working with carbon buckytubes with this aim in mind. These are long, thin tubes made of pure carbon that are also known as carbon nanotubes.

Stoddart, whose work is being funded by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, says he has already designed

a switch that may be even faster. It has a dumbbell design and may be more efficient than the linked rings.

AOL 6.0 to Include E-Mail, Shopping Improvements

The new version of America Online Inc.’s client software, AOL 6.0, will include improvements in the electronic mail and shopping features, media analysts said Thursday after meeting with AOL management.

AOL 6.0, which is expected to be available in late September, will offer more personalization of content and easier navigation through the service, as well as a new design and look, analysts said.

‘‘The AOL 4.0 to 5.0 transition came with substantially more new features," said ING Baring analyst Youssef Squali. ‘‘The 6.0 to me is an enhancement of a lot of the features that were already out there."

‘‘Better navigation and more consumer services equal more usage which

equals more advertising and commerce revenues," said Scott Reamer, analyst at SG Cowen, in a research note.

The AOL Welcome Screen in the new version will encompass programming to make it more personable, enabling members to customize up to 10 areas they visit often.

‘‘Their user group is aging as they get more experience. It becomes too simple and they want something more like a Yahoo interface so I would expect the next version to have a dual mode with something for advanced users and new users," said Rob Enderle, analyst at Giga Information. ‘‘Personalization is a way to let their more experienced users customize their front-end experience and not get frustrated."

A new shopping assistant and a built-in AOL wallet, a feature that rivals Yahoo Inc. and Microsoft Corp. both have, will enable one-click shopping to about 300 AOL merchant partners by the holiday season, analysts said.

‘‘The launch of the AOL wallet could increase the transaction completion percentage meaningfully. Currently about 60 percent of consumers cancel a transaction (on-line) when it comes time to input their credit card info," Reamer said, adding that even small increases in this metric could result in substantial increases in revenue for merchant partners and therefore more ad and commerce revenue for AOL.

Dulles, Va.-based AOL, whose merger with media giant Time Warner Inc. is expected to close this fall, will again enhance e-mail and instant messaging features in this version.

The new features will allow members to sort messages and save them directly into specific folders, as well as set customized ‘‘do not disturb" messages while on-line and a status window detailing instant messages received while away or busy.

‘‘They don’t have a lot of integration between e-mail and instant messaging services. We will see if they integrate the two platforms this time," Enderle said, referring to the inability of AOL’s AIM users to talk to AOL’s ICQ users.

Instant messaging (IM) rivals have called on AOL to open its platform so that users of other services can also talk to AOL IM users.

AOL 6.0 will also feature integration between devices, voice enablement and a media player that will allow the download of streaming media and supports all sorts of files.

A company spokeswoman declined to comment on how many people have downloaded AOL 6.0 during its beta tests, which began in June.

‘‘AOL 6.0 should help improve users’ experience further, driving even lower the number of unsatisfied shoppers at sites affiliated with AOL. (It) brings the company one step closer to a fully operational AOL Anywhere strategy," Squali said, referring to the company’s goal of providing its services to members worldwide.

Analysts also said the AOL.com flagship site will also be relaunched as the new hub for AOL Anywhere, the company’s strategy to ensure the Internet giant’s services are available to members wherever they are.

GNOME Throws Down The Gauntlet

Thirteen open-source vendors and organizations launch their plan for an alternative to the Windows/Office desktop monopoly.

Representatives from 13 different companies and organizations took to the podium Tuesday at LinuxWorld with one unified intention: to combat Microsoft’s dominance on the desktop.

Members of the newly minted Gnome Foundation outlined the various open-source technologies they are hoping to integrate going forward. The participants said they believed the very nature of the GNU public license and open-source development model would prevent them from succumbing to the fragmentation and infighting that has plagued standardization efforts over the years.

"This is more than just another desktop or just another initiative," claimed Sun Microsystems vice president and general manager Marco Boerries. Instead, the Gnome Foundation’s goal is to establish a user environment where "you won’t need to be worried about somebody closing them out or eating their lunch."

Sun and other open-source vendors have been vocal in their charges that Microsoft Corp. has hindered competition by refusing to publicize all of the Windows and Office application programming interfaces.

What’s in an open-source desktop?

The folks backing The Gnome Project and its Gnome Foundation group of directors claim they want to change the rules for developers and users of desktop software.

The Gnome Project has championed the Gnome user environment that runs on a variety of Linux and Unix variants. The Gnome Foundation, the formation of which was announced on Tuesday, will administer not only the direction of the open-source Gnome interface but also a variety of other elements that will comprise the evolving Gnome desktop environment. Among these elements are:

* Gnome Office, the open-source components of StarOffice contributed by Sun Microsystems Inc.;
* Evolution, a competitor to Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes on the groupware/messaging front that is being developed by Helix Code;
* Nautilus, an open-source graphical file manager developed by Eazel;
* Mozilla, the open-source version of the Netscape Navigator Web browser;
* Sash, an open source development tool recently placed into open source by IBM; and
* Gnome’s Bonobo component project and GTK toolkit work.

The Foundation is aiming to roll into a single, embedded environment all of the various technologies, explained Eazel vice president of engineering Bud Tribble. "The Gnome desktop will integrate embedded Mozilla into the (Eazel) Nautilus file manager," Tribble said. "From the user’s view, they’ll get a single view of the local storage, Web and Web services."

As part of Tuesday’s Gnome Foundation unveiling, Compaq Computer Corp., Hewlett-Packard Co., IBM Corp. and Sun’s hardware business all lent their

backing, by committing to make the Gnome interface an integrated part of the client user interfaces going forward. Compaq said it has underway an effort to integrate the Gnome environment onto its iPaq handhelds. HP, IBM and Sun all said they are planning to offer Gnome as an adjunct to the Common Desktop Environment (CDE) on their Unix platforms.

How rapidly any of the Gnome user environments will be available from their respective vendors is uncertain. Sun officials said they planned to have an early test version of Gnome on Solaris available before the end of the year, with a more solid release available to users by mid-2001.

In addition to hardware makers Compaq, HP, IBM and Sun, other backers of the Gnome Foundation include: Helix Code, CollabNet, Gnumatic Inc., the Object Management Group, Red Hat Inc., VA Linux Systems Inc. and the Free Software Foundation.

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